

EDUCATION CONNECTION

Addressing educational issues that affect military children in
Navy Region Mid-Atlantic

Issue 4, October 2010



In this issue:

- P1** Back to School Tips
- P2** Latest Ed News
 - President Obama's Back-to-School Speech
 - 'Courage in the Classroom'
- P3** Latest Ed News (cont.)
 - Free & Reduced Lunch
- P3** Meet Your SLO
- P4** Exceptional Family Member Program
 - SCOR
 - IDEA
 - The Special Ed Cycle
- P5** Resources for Parents & Educators
 - Professional Development
 - Health & Wellness Pgm
- P6** Grade-level Resources
 - Elementary, Secondary & Post Secondary
- P8** Advice Corner
 - Scholarships / Homework

Back to School Time...is also Time to Get Organized!

by: Marian Leverette, M.A.T., M.A.Ed., Mid-Atlantic Regional School Liaison Officer

Is it football season already? Is it time for the leaves to change? It must be. It's fall and the business of school will soon be in full swing. Now is the time for teachers to prepare to return to work while parents are getting kids new backpacks and school supplies for the upcoming school year. September 7 signaled summer as being officially over for those students attending public school in the Tidewater area this year. The start of a new school year brings many military children to new schools in the Hampton Roads area. Military children often face being "the new kid in school" every year when our sailors, soldiers and airmen get orders to a new duty station. Trying to decide where one should live, picking the right school, while keeping track of academic records, medical records, and the academic requirements of a new school district can be a lot to manage without help. Parents with a few organizational tips you can help your students and household get organized to prepare for a successful academic school year. Yes, it's time to begin adjusting to a new routine. Here are some tips to make everyone's life easier.

Back-to-school tips

- The Early Bird Gets the Worm: Help your children to start getting to bed earlier the week before school begins. Getting to bed earlier and waking up earlier will make a big difference in their attitude and work performance.
- If you have a teenager, you might want to wait to buy some items until after school starts. Teenagers often want to look like their classmates and may reject clothes you've bought for them. Let them check out what others are wearing the first week of school, and then take them shopping. This way, you may avoid wasting time returning items later.
- Start limiting TV and encouraging more reading.
- Pick out clothes the night before.
- Check your schools websites for updates.
- Assemble outfits on hangers.
- Complete any needed medical, dental, and eye-care appointments as soon as possible. [Don't cause unnecessary absences].
- Call your child care provider at least a week before school starts to review your arrangement.
- Review children's allowances or pocket money. Adjust your budget to consider changing school fees or the costs of lunches, transportation, or activities.
- See if your child's school has any child care available on site before or after school, or if any child care centers drop off or pick up students before and after school.
- Know the school bus route and schedule.
- Make a list of everything you need to do before school starts.
- Do something fun together before school starts. Go on a picnic, cook out, play board games.
- Label everything that your child will be taking to school.
- Find out about dress codes before you shop.
- Make sure that your children will always have your work and cell phone numbers with them at school and activities.
- Go through your children's clothes with them.
- Prepare preschoolers for the coming changes.
- Don't shop the day before school starts. Many stores have back-to-school sales in August. Shop early for the widest selection. If back-to-school shopping at crowded malls tends to leave you feeling tense and exhausted, consider doing some shopping through catalogues or online.
- Put up a family calendar in a central place.
- Give each family member a place to store things for school and work.
- Buy a special folder with sections or another filing system to help organize school papers and all the forms you'll need to fill out.



This year can be the best year every with just a little preparation. Remember if you have any questions concerning educational issues in this area you can contact your local school liaison officer. The school liaison officers (SLOs) sole purpose is to ensure that parents and students transition into a new school is a smooth as possible. Now would be a good time to review some of the informational resources available to military families that SLO's have available for you. Don't delay, give them a call today.

I'd also like to encourage all parents to become involved in their children's Parent-Teacher Association (PTA). The PTA is an organization that promotes a cooperative relationship between parents and teachers. It facilitates a team approach to managing certain school affairs. It can also be a venue to make new friends if one is new to the area. The success of your child and your school is directly proportional to the degree of parent/teacher involvement and cooperation. May your child's coming academic year be healthy, happy and a complete success. Remember, we're here if you need us!

President Obama's 2010 Back to School Speech

As students begin their school year, President Barack Obama delivered his second annual Back to School speech Tuesday, September 14 at Julia R Masterman Middle-High School in Philadelphia, PA. The President's Back to School Speech was an opportunity to speak directly to students across the country. Last year, President Obama encouraged students to study hard, stay in school, and take responsibility for their education.

"Every single one of you has something you're good at. Every single one of you has something to offer. And you have a responsibility to yourself to discover what that is. That's the opportunity an education can provide," President Obama said to students last year.

In his second annual back-to-school address, President Barack Obama stressed the importance of education in today's global economy and everyone's [responsibility](#) to make sure students get the best schooling possible. But what really resonated with many students and adults alike was the president's personal story and struggles.

"Nobody gets to write your destiny but you. Your future is in your hands," Obama said in his speech at the Julia R. Masterman Laboratory and Demonstration School in Philadelphia. "So long as you're willing to stay focused on your education, there's not a single thing that any of you cannot accomplish."

Obama encouraged students to stay in school, study hard and take ownership for their learning. For more information go to [ed.gov](#) or if you want to watch the speech, visit www.whitehouse.gov/back-to-school.

U.S. Education Secretary Embarks on 'Courage in the Classroom' Bus Tour to Honor Nation's Teachers

As students go back to school, Secretary Duncan took a bus tour to visit schools, honor and listen to teachers, meet with parents and students, and highlight success. Military families make incredible sacrifices to serve our country. One of them is moving several times during their careers.

During Secretary Duncan's travel he stopped at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard to discuss how educators can address the unique needs of military children. The Portsmouth Shipyard is one of more than 200 military bases that have a liaison who works with local schools to help ease the transition for students. Hannah McCarthy is the installation School Liaison Officer in that area.

When question during that visit Ms. McCarthy stated that the most important recent educational development is the interstate compact in which states share student records, according to Hannah McCarthy, the school liaison for the shipyard. Through the compact, sending schools provide information such as grades, an individualized education program, and test scores that help receiving schools address the needs of students.

"The compact has been instrumental in helping alleviate some of the challenges that military families have," McCarthy told the secretary. McCarthy also says she reaches out to school districts that will be enrolling students whose families are moving to new assignments. "I can call wherever they're going and help set them up," she said. Throughout the tour, Duncan visited classrooms in an effort to break ground in closing the achievement gap, early education, and school nutrition and safety and teacher recruitment. Duncan was joined by public school teachers now serving as U.S. Department of Education teaching fellows as well as local leaders.

Below is an excerpt from Secretary Duncan about his tour:

There's Courage in Our Country's Classrooms, by Secretary Arne Duncan on September 02, 2010

As students head back to school this fall, I travelled over the last two weeks on an eight-state bus tour to highlight "Courage in the Classroom." The mission of the tour was simple: to honor our nation's unsung heroes—our teachers. We started in Little Rock, Ark., where I visited historic [Central High School](#) and talked to a group of teachers there about the Obama administration's proposal to reauthorize the [Elementary and Secondary Education Act](#) (ESEA), commonly known as No Child Left Behind. Our big blue bus then continued on to [Hamburg, Arkansas](#), where I saw the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) at work on a [rural high school campus](#) that's being upgraded and visited a pre-kindergarten center that is helping young learners start school on the right foot.

We then rolled into [Louisiana](#). I joined students at a Monroe magnet school for a tour of their school's garden and a conversation with the faculty about the importance of creating a healthy school environment. As both Secretary of Education and a parent, I'm a huge believer in the First Lady's [Let's Move](#) initiative. I also stopped by a lively gathering of the state teachers union and emphasized the important role their organization plays in shaping our nation's future. In [Tallulah, Louisiana](#), I got a workout when I played basketball with the Madison High School Jaguars.

The next day, we woke up in [Jackson, Mississippi](#), and visited the Kids Kollege Children's Defense Fund Freedom School at Jackson State University to talk with teacher interns about what we can do to recruit a new generation of effective teachers. We stopped for lunch in [Hattiesburg, Mississippi](#), where I got teachers' ideas for improving assessments of students' learning and better compensating and evaluating teachers. In the last event of the southern leg of the tour, I visited [George C. Hall Elementary School](#) in Mobile, Alabama, to learn how the school and surrounding community have successfully turned around that school.

The trip through the South was a busy two days, but our tour didn't end there. After a weekend back in Washington, the bus set out again, this time in the Northeast. We started in Albany, New York, where I joined Gov. Paterson to praise the state for its courage in reforming education, which the Department of Education recently recognized with a [Race to the Top award](#).

In [Massachusetts](#), another Race to the Top winner, I visited a high school in Springfield for a conversation about ways we can better engage students in their educations. Next, we went to [Keene, New Hampshire](#), to meet some college students who are preparing to become teachers. We talked about how we can improve training to help them address the challenges they'll face in the classroom. In [Manchester, New Hampshire](#) I dropped by Bakersville Elementary and toured the neighborhood, which is home to students from 18 different countries.

In [Portsmouth, New Hampshire](#) I talked with military families at the Naval Shipyard about the difficulties they face in providing their children with a consistently top-notch education as they move around our country and the world in our nation's service.

Our last stop was [Maine](#), one of several states on this tour that I hadn't visited before as Secretary. In Portland I enjoyed the

presentations of three rising 8th graders about the impact of the civil rights movement in their lives today.

Throughout the "[Courage in the Classroom](#)" tour, I was encouraged by teachers who are working hard to make a difference in the lives of students, often in difficult circumstances. From a teacher-in-training in Arkansas, who started his education as a 4 year old in the pre-kindergarten program I visited, to a teacher in Maine who has been in the classroom 35 years, the people I met along the way were truly inspiring. Through their tireless work, I am confident our nation will be able to achieve the President's 2020 goal of having the highest college graduation rate in the world.

Although the tour is over, I remain interested in hearing from you about how Americans can educate our way to a better economy and once again lead the world in education. We can continue this conversation on ED.gov's [blog](#), on my [Facebook page](#) and on Twitter ([@ED_Outreach](#)). Have a great school year, everyone. Arne Duncan is the Secretary of Education

Military Pays and Allowances for the Free and Reduced Lunch Programs

August 30, 2010

As kiddos all over are headed back to school, there have been lots of questions about how military pay and allowances affect the applications for Free and Reduced Lunch Programs. Free and reduced cost lunches are a huge benefit to families who are struggling financially and many military families qualify for these programs. The National School Lunch Program is a federally assisted meal program operating in over 101,000 public and non-profit private schools and residential child care institutions. It provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free lunches to more than 30.5 million children each school day in 2008. In 1998, Congress expanded the National School Lunch Program to include reimbursement for snacks served to children in afterschool educational and enrichment programs to include children through 18 years of age.

The Food and Nutrition Service administers the program at the Federal level. At the State level, the National School Lunch Program is usually administered by State education agencies, which operate the program through agreements with school food authorities. ([From the NSLP Fact Sheet.](#))

The big question is this: What pays and allowances do you include as income? Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH): You include the housing allowance if you live off base, but you do not include housing allowance if you live on base or live in privatized military housing. I can already hear the cries of "unfair!" and I agree. If anyone wants to start talking to Congress about that, I am sure that you would find a huge amount of support from military families. Unfortunately, that is the way that the rules are currently written.

Basic Allowance for Subsistence (BAS), incentive pays, alimony, child support and any other income are supposed to be included as income.

Military service members who receive the [Family Supplemental Subsistence Allowance](#) do not include that allowance as part of their income.

Eligibility for Free or Reduced Breakfast and Lunch programs is based upon Income Eligibility Guidelines (IEGs) that are published by the federal Department of Health and Human Services. In addition to students who qualify based on the IEGs, families who receive WIC (Women, Infants and Children) or SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefits are automatically eligible (but may need to apply.) There are three different charts for IEGs — one for the continental US, one for Hawaii, and one for Alaska (and overseas locations.) The rates for the 2010–2011 school year have not changed from the 2009–2010 rates.

I hope this answers lots of questions about the free and reduced price school lunch program. If you have other questions, you can leave them in the comments or contact your child's school. Read more:

<http://paycheck-chronicles.military.com/2010/08/30/military-pays-and-allowances-for-the-free-and-reduced-lunch-programs/#ixzz0yPDhMutj>

Meet Your School Liaison Officer

Meet Your School Liaison Officer

Featured SLO: Hannah McCarthy, Portsmouth Naval Shipyard/Naval Station Brunswick

Hannah McCarthy has been a member of the Child and Youth Programs team as a School Liaison officer since September 2009. In a recent interview she shared a few words about herself so that our readers can get to know her better.

What professional positions have you held prior to joining PNSY as the School Liaison Officer? I worked at NASB for the past 9 years as a Program Manager, Youth/Special Events Coordinator and Marketing Assistant. I have also worked as a trained facilitator and instructor for employee customer service focus groups and taught an undergraduate lab at the University of Southern Maine.

How do you think your prior experiences have prepared you for this position as School Liaison Officer? I having been a teacher both in the classroom and the kitchen that gave me a great insight in the learning styles of students and that has prepared me to meet the needs of students.

What do you hope to accomplish as the PNSY School Liaison Officer? Help bridge the education gap for mobile military students that transition in and out of the area.

What is something that not too many people may know about you that you would like to share today? I love to cook! I have completed extensive culinary arts training at the Culinary Institute of America in New York and the Cordon Blue Course in London.





DoD EFMP Special Announcement: New Department of Defense Special Care Organizational Records

The Department of Defense (DoD) has two very useful organizing tools for military families with special needs: the Special Care Organizational Record (SCOR) for Children with Special Health Care Needs and the SCOR for Adults with Special Health Care Needs. The SCORs are tools for caregivers, providing central repositories for recording and tracking information about their family member's ongoing support and health needs. Although the focus for each SCOR differs, they share the same fundamental goal of making it easier to organize, track, and update information for special needs family members.

For example, families can use their SCOR to track changes in medicines or treatments, list telephone numbers for health care providers and community organizations, prepare for appointments, file information about health history, share information with primary care doctors, school nurses, daycare staff, and others caregivers.

Each SCOR is tailored to the unique needs of a special needs family member. For example, the SCOR for Children includes sections for copies of a child's Individualized Family Service Plan or Individualized Education Program paperwork. The SCOR for Adults has sections for documenting daily routines, vacation preferences, employment and vocational experiences, and more! Each tool was vetted by the Exceptional Family Member Program managers, medical and education professionals, and recognized disability expert, Dr. Ann Turnbull.

Military families can order a hard copy of the SCOR for Children with Special Health Care Needs from Military OneSource or by calling 1-800-342-9647. The hard copy of the SCOR for Children also comes with a CD that has the SCOR and the DoD Special Needs Parent Toolkit files included. The SCOR for Children comes in a professionally designed binder that has pockets for business cards, receipts, and other important items.

Both the SCOR for Children and Adults can also be downloaded from [MilitaryHOMEFRONT](#). DoD has also developed records organizers for Eldercare and for Families, which are also available for downloading from MilitaryHOMEFRONT. The Department of Defense continues to revise and improve upon products for military families with special needs. Contact MilitaryHOMEFRONT to provide your feedback on the SCORs.

Helpful Information For Special Needs Parents

If you're the parent of a child with special needs, or you suspect your child has a learning disability, the special education system can be a great asset. But understanding how the system works is often a challenge. Military families face even greater obstacles because frequent moves make it necessary to learn new procedures -- and adjust to new teachers -- at each new duty station. The following information will help you learn to navigate the system and how to interact with the professionals who work with your child.

The Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act is the legislation that establishes guidelines that public schools, including DoD schools, must follow when it comes to special education. The major points of the IDEA are:

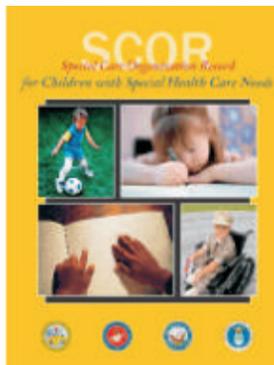
- Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). This means qualifying children are entitled to a free education, either in the public schools or under the direction of the public school system.
- Appropriate evaluation. The school must gather the appropriate information necessary to ensure a child is able to be involved and progress within the general curriculum of the school.
- Individualized Education Program (IEP). Each eligible child will have an Individualized Education Program (IEP), which is a written plan developed according to the standards detailed in the IDEA.
- Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). Children with disabilities should be educated with non-disabled peers when possible. Children with special needs should be separated only when the nature of the disability deems it necessary.
- Parental role. Parents are an important part of the special education process. The IDEA recognizes that parent involvement helps to ensure that children with special needs can reach their potential.
- Procedural safeguards. This aspect of the IDEA ensures that the rights of the child and parents are protected, and that there are clear steps to follow in case of a dispute.

The Special Education Cycle

The IDEA sets specific guidelines that school systems must follow. The following steps help ensure those guidelines are followed and that schools can successfully identify children who might qualify for special education services.

Referral. When a child has an obvious disability or when a parent, teacher, doctor, or other professional notices that a child is not progressing in school, the information is given (usually in writing) to the school system. After the referral is made, a screening committee will meet to determine whether or not the child needs a full evaluation. If an evaluation is necessary, the school will request a written consent from the parent.

Evaluation. The evaluation is a series of assessments the school system will use as they try to determine whether or not a child qualifies for special education. If your child is being evaluated, he has the right to be evaluated in his native language or by other means (such as sign language), if needed. The evaluation should be completed within 60 days of the written consent, but time frames may vary by state.



My spouse was gone on multiple deployments. He was concerned that I was not prepared to be the primary caregiver for our child when I was having surgery and needed to recuperate – I used to SCOR to provide him with all the pertinent information he would need. We love it!

Professional Development Corner

Educators and Military Child/Student Service Providers Professional Development Opportunity:

The critical importance of the professional educator in supporting and accommodating the military student in transition is without question. Therefore local school liaisons Officers are hosting the "Transition Counselor Institute-Phase One Professional Development Course". Registration is now open for the upcoming October workshop in Virginia Beach.

Location: Holiday Inn Oceanside, 2101 Atlantic Avenue, Virginia Beach, VA 23451

When: 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. both days (10/20–21/2010)

The Transition Counselor Institute Goal:

To improve high school predictability for the mobile military student. The TCI workshop is intended to increase availability of specifically trained transition counselors and other participants, who have a shared knowledge of turbulence.

Transition Counselor Institute Phase One: Awareness, Processes, and Networks

Topics for Phase I are: Military Life, Challenges for K-12 Students in Transition, Critical Issues, Research on Military Students and the Impact of Transition, Understanding & Navigating the Differences in School Requirements, School Responsibilities, Informing, Involving & Supporting Military Parents, Available Resources, Exploring Proven Practices and Procedures

Who should attend the TCI?

The MCEC's Transition Counselor Institute (TCI) is primarily held for elementary, middle and high school guidance professionals. It is a concept for the MCEC series of professional development institutes for counselors. Additionally who should attend: School Principals, Installation representatives: Commanding Officers, School Liaison Officers, Family Support Directors, and Relocation Specialists

To register

Go to www.militarychild.org and click on the upcoming training tab to sign up. If you have any additional questions contact your local school liaison officer.

The Special Education Cycle (cont.)

Evaluations in the DoD schools. The DoD school system follows the same guidelines established by the IDEA. Child Find is a program used in DoD schools to help identify children who may be eligible to receive special education services. If a formal assessment is necessary, a Case Study Committee (CSC) will help guide the process and determine the child's needs. More information on special education in the DoD school system is available on the DoD Education Activity's Special Needs site at www.dodea.edu/curriculum/specialEduc.cfm.

Eligibility meeting. After the evaluation is complete, an eligibility meeting is held to determine whether or not the child qualifies for special education. Usually, the meeting will include a parent, the child's teacher, a special education teacher, a school administrator, and any related specialists. As a parent, your input is important. To help you prepare, you can request a copy of your child's evaluation before the meeting. If special education services are necessary, the next step is to develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Disagreements. If all goes well, you and the school system will agree on your child's special education services. But, should a disagreement occur, you can request an administrative review within the school system. If this is not available or you are not satisfied, you may request mediation or a due process hearing.

DoDEA Health and Wellness Program

Healthy Brown Bag Lunches

It's back to school time again, so when planning meals and snacks, teach young children about making healthy choices by explaining how "grow-and-go" foods will help them feel good and have fun at school. Grow-and-go foods are foods high in complex carbohydrates, good sources of protein, include vitamins and minerals and a moderate amount of fat.

Here are some quick and easy ideas courtesy of the Defense Commissary Agency for lunch and snacks that are grow-and-go foods:

- **B-n-B Wrap (Banana and nut butter wrap).** Mash a banana and mix with any nut butter. Here is an opportunity to try a different butter - like almond butter, which is high in vitamin E and protein. If your child prefers, sprinkle with dried fruit or coconut for a different flavor. Spread it on a whole-wheat wrap or flat bread, roll it up, cut it up and bag it.
- **Turkey, ham or chicken with hummus or Greek yogurt wrap.** Spread some plain hummus or Greek yogurt on a wrap, add meat slices, any cheese (optional), lettuce or spinach and cucumber slices. Roll it up and bag it. Hummus or Greek yogurt adds a unique flavor, so if your children do not like it, use mustard or a little mayonnaise.
- **M-n-C roll up (Meat and cheese roll ups).** Take any thinly sliced luncheon meat and your children's favorite cheese, roll it up and bag it. Also pack some whole grain crackers or pita chips for energy-packed carbohydrates.
- **Pita pocket with curry chicken salad.** Take chopped chicken and mix it with a little curry, Greek yogurt, chopped celery and chopped carrots. Put it in a whole wheat pita pocket with spinach or romaine lettuce.
- **Flat bread or bagel pizza.** Toast a flat bread or 1/2 bagel pizza with spaghetti sauce, shredded cheese and your choice of vegetables such as spinach, tomato slices, squash or broccoli.
- **Baby carrots, cucumbers chunks, grape tomatoes, hummus, whole-grain crackers and pita chips.** Put some hummus in a small container to use as a dip. Bag the carrots, cucumber chunks and grape tomatoes. Also pack some whole grain crackers or pita chips for energy-packed carbohydrates.
- **Low-fat yogurt, cheese, sandwiches.** Keep low-fat yogurt, cheese and sandwiches cold by using an ice pack, frozen juice box or frozen milk box.
- **Tortilla chips, plain yogurt and salsa.** Cut up tortillas in quarters, sprinkle a little salt on them and heat them in the microwave for a minute or two. Mix the yogurt, for protein and calcium, with salsa or just put plain salsa in a small container for a dip.
- **Trail mix.** Mix almonds, peanuts, dried fruit and whole-grain cereal for a nutrient dense, energy-packed food and bag it. This is a great "take it anywhere" kind of food.
- **Great snacks.** Cheese sticks, nuts, frozen yogurt, 100-percent juice in boxes, dried fruit, fresh fruit and canned fruit all make great snacks and additions to lunches.

Elementary Corner

Is Your Child Ready for Kindergarten?

Not every 4- or 5-year old is necessarily ready to start school just because the number of candles on his birthday cake indicates that he should be. Just as it takes some children a little longer than others to learn how to walk, some children may lag behind other children the same age when it comes to school readiness.

Here are the key points to keep in mind when you're trying to determine whether your child is ready to start school:

- Does your child cope reasonably well when he is separated from you? If your child finds it extremely stressful to be away from you, even for a short period of time, the first few weeks of kindergarten could prove to be a major adjustment for him. That's not to say that sending him to kindergarten would necessarily be the wrong decision, however. In fact, enrolling him in kindergarten actually may help, over time, to ease his separation anxiety. You simply need to know right from the start that your child is likely to face a rockier-than-average transition to kindergarten.
- Is your child able to get his coat and his shoes on and off by himself? Although no one is going to ban your child from kindergarten because he has not yet mastered the art of tying his own shoes and zipping up his own jacket, he'll feel much more comfortable in the kindergarten classroom if he's able to do some of these things for himself. Of course, being able to get his clothes up and down (and the necessary fastening devices open and closed) in the bathroom without assistance will make a huge difference in terms of how well he settles in to the whole kindergarten routine: He won't have to worry about whether anyone will be around to help him with his clothes when nature calls.
- Is your child able to control his temper reasonably well when he's frustrated? The kindergarten teacher isn't going to expect your child to show up sporting the negotiating skills of a career diplomat, but she will appreciate it if your child has at least a few coping skills under his belt. If he doesn't, he'll need to work on developing them both at home and during his time in the kindergarten classroom, but be prepared to participate early on in a few parent-teacher conferences.
- Does your child enjoy playing with other children? If your child has reasonably good social skills and tends to get along well with other children most of the time, he's likely to thrive in the kindergarten setting. You'll probably find that he looks forward to going to school each day because he's so eager to play with his friends. It also helps if he's able to resolve conflicts with other children on his own without requiring constant intervention from an adult. He'll feel a lot more secure and in control if he can resolve a lot of the more run-of-the-mill disputes on his own.
- Is your child able to follow basic instructions? Military-style obedience may not be required of kindergarten students, but it's helpful if your child is capable of following basic instructions: for example, "Please hang up your coat on your coat hook and then join the rest of the boys and girls for circle time."
- Is your child capable of working independently for short periods of time? Even a kindergarten teacher who lucks out and ends up with a small class of around a dozen students is still outnumbered 12 to 1, which is why she will be hugely grateful if your child is capable of working on his own for short stretches. Your child will also be a lot less stressed if he's able to keep himself busy while he waits for his turn to talk with the teacher.
- Is your child capable of sitting still and listening to a story without disrupting his classmates? Imagine the skill that is required in convincing a dozen or more 4-year-olds to sit down and listen to a story at the same time. The kindergarten teacher will appreciate it tremendously if your child is able to sit still for at least a few minutes at a time. Life will be a lot more pleasant for your child if he has the necessary attention span to be able to sit still for a few minutes.
- Is your child able to communicate his needs effectively? Imagine how frustrating—and scary—it would be to find yourself in a strange classroom with a strange teacher and to be unable to get your message across. That's why most educators recommend that children starting kindergarten be capable of expressing themselves, either verbally or otherwise.

Provided by Ann Douglas, Author of *The Mother of all Parenting Books: The Ultimate Guide to Raising a Happy, Healthy Child from Preschool through the Preteens*

SECONDARY CORNER: Middle School Children

Tips for Parents of Children Going to Middle School for the First Time

By Denise Witmer
For children going into middle school, there are many anxieties, apprehensions and fears to deal with and overcome. Middle schools are larger than elementary schools, the school work is harder to do, and there are more classes and more teachers – all with different expectations and personalities. If you have a child who is entering middle school for the first time, know that it is normal for your child to express concern and maybe even exhibit some acting out behavior over school issues. Here are some tips that you can do to help your child through this transition:

- Don't be too anxious about your child going to middle school. She will take clues from you and if you are consistently talking to other parents about how worried you are, she will hear you. Your child is capable of handling middle school. You know this. Empower her by letting her know that you know this.
- Teach him daily organizational habits like checking an assignment sheet before leaving his locker everyday or packing up his book bag the night before and being sure he has everything he needs for the next day.
- Put up his daily schedule on the refrigerator. This is a wonderful spot for him to check whether he has gym or band on that particular day. You will also be able to access his schedule here and help him with gentle reminders.
- Encourage him to get involved in school activities. Be there when he needs a ride or has a game.
- Go to any meetings or parenting classes your child's school offers. Most middle schools offer a class for parents whose children are transitioning from elementary school to middle school. Use this resource.
- Openly communicate to your preteen child that you are available to help him with what ever he needs. While you may feel that your child knows this already, now is a good time to remind him.
- Do not be afraid to communicate with your child's middle school administrators and teachers. They are there to help.

Planning on going to college?

A great education can help you achieve your dreams. You can do it. Here's how. Start with a quick visit to the following website for starters www.college.gov.

More education can make a huge difference in your life — and your family's. It can open doors of opportunity, financially and personally. Find out what going can mean for you:

- boost your earnings more education = more opportunity
- find your passion = endless possibilities
- prove your potential = you can succeed
- grow with help and support = lots of resources are there for you
- lift your family = help to get them in your corner

Check out this Website to help students prepare for the SAT's: www.SoarAtHome.org

How to Access SOAR SAT/ACT Test Preparation

1. Parents register for SOAR at SoarAtHome.org. During registration, parents are prompted to create student accounts for their child or children.
2. Students use their login and access SOAR at SoarAtHome.org by clicking the 'Returning Students' button.
3. Once on the SOAR student site, students will click 'Program Materials'.



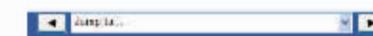
4. Click on 'SAT and ACT Test Prep Site'. *PLEASE NOTE* - The username and password for this site is listed on the 'Program Materials' page - it is NOT your SOAR login.
5. When you have been successfully logged onto the site, you will choose 'SAT Online' or 'ACT Online'.



6. Before you start the course, read the 'Quick Instructions' link. This contains information regarding navigating the course content.



7. Remember these important instructions as you work through the course:
 - a. Each time that you use the SAT/ACT course, please make note of your place in the course—your place is not saved. Upon returning to the site, click the link of the next lesson and begin.
 - b. Use the left and right black arrows to move through the lessons.



- c. During some lessons, click the yellow 'next step' to continue the instruction.



- d. You may repeat a lesson as many times as you wish.

Q: Dear Sharon I am a looking for scholarship information for my 12th grader. Are there any scholarships for military dependents?

A: Yes, there are several scholarships for military children. I suggest you visit www.militaryscholar.org for more information. Also, different military commands or their supporting organizations have established scholarships for family members of active duty personnel.

Submarine Families: Dolphin Scholarship Foundations www.dolphinscholarship.org Naval Special Warfare Families: Naval Special Warfare Foundation www.nswfoundation.org Naval Aviators: Wings over America Scholarship Foundation www.wingsoveramerica.us

The Military Homefront Site www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil offer an abundance of information. Look under "Troops and Families: Education", and then select "Scholarships and Financial Aid". You will see a link for "Military Students" and a list of scholarships and search engines.

In addition, do not just focus on scholarships for military dependents but check with your high school guidance office for scholarship postings starting in late October. The guidance counselor is one of your best advocates in the college process.

The most important thing is to start early, follow all instructions and meet deadlines.

HANDLING HOMEWORK!

Practice, Practice, Practice By: Naval Station Norfolk SLO

Great athletes, musicians, artists have one thing in common. They have mastered their craft through "practice". Homework is "practice". If you want to become a better reader, you read often. If you want to become a better speller, you review your spelling words often. Homework is "practice".

This school year – allow "practice" to be the buzz word in your home. Before school starts, sit down with your child(ren) and have a heart-to-heart with them. Have an open discussion about homework and its importance in your child education. Give them clear – age appropriate examples of how "practice" leads to greater success not just in sports, but in their academic lives.

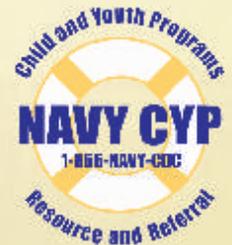
The amount of homework given to students should be timed appropriately for the age of the child. Younger children will usually have less homework than older children. However, the intent is usually to "practice" learned skills through regular reinforcement. Not all reinforcement happens in the classroom.

Homework is also a perfect opportunity for the parent-teacher partnership to blossom. The teacher should make sure the homework is age appropriate, directly tied to the lesson that has already been taught, clearly provides opportunities for "practice" and further clarity, and states directions and objectives on the homework for parental guidance. The homework should be given right after a lesson has been taught as per the objective; the homework should be graded promptly and returned to the parent for further review.

If the student is not performing well on homework assignments, this provides an opportunity once again for the parent-teacher relationship to blossom. The parent and teacher may discuss options that will allow the student to be further exposed to additional efforts that foster the learning of the required material and help to build student confidence during the learning process.

To locate the learning objectives for your child's grade and subject, please visit the Department of Education's website and select the appropriate Standard of Learning for your child by viewing the list by Subject on the right-hand column and then clicking on the grade of your child.

http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/standards_docs/index.shtml



School Liaison Officer Contact Information

Mid-Atlantic Regional SLO.....(757) 322-2679	Norfolk Naval Shipyard SLO.....(757) 438-3638
Naval Station Norfolk/NSA SLO(757) 322-9108	New London SUBASE SLO(860) 694-3772
NAS Oceana/Dam Neck SLO.....(757) 433-3976	PNSY/NAS Brunswick SLO(207) 438-2466
JEB Little Creek SLO.....(757) 462-4483	Naval Station Newport SLO.....(401) 841-7126
JEB Fort Story SLO(757) 422-7101 ext. 238	NIOC Sugar Grove SLO(304)249-6309
NWS Yorktown SLO(757) 887-7757	NSU Saratoga Springs SLO(518) 886-0200 ext 161